Historical Society Series.

No. I.

Reminiscences of the Texas Republic.

Historical Society of Galveston Series.

No. 1.

REMINISCENCES

OF THE

TEXAS REPUBLIC.

ANNUAL ADDRESS

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GALVESTON,

DECEMBER 15, 1875.

BY ASHBEL SMITH.

WITH A PRELIMINARY

Notice of the Historical Society of Galveston.

PUBLISHED BY THE SOCIETY.

GALVESTON, TEXAS.
1876.

hoped that a nucleus might be formed, which, with growth, would eventually create an attraction for these waifs of Texas history. The collection might grow to be valuable in the eyes of historians; and possibly eventually bring out something which would be worth giving to the world in print, as a contribution to the history of Texas.

These hopes have been realized in part; and the occasion is availed of to give the present scanty record of the early days of the society, trusting that it may result in an increase of contributions to their archives, and a wider extension of their sphere of usefulness.

On the evening of Thursday the third day of August, 1871, about a dozen gentlemen gathered at the office of Messrs. McElmore and Hume, room No. 7 in the Ballinger building on Post office street. After some preliminary conversation and discussion, it was then and there

Resolved, That the Galveston Historical Society be now organized; that for the purposes of this organization the constitution and by-laws of the New York Historical Society be and are hereby adopted as our rules for government, until such time as the needs of the society shall require a special organization.

The resolution being unanimously adopted, an election for officers was held. Dr. S. M. Welsh was elected president, but subsequently declining to serve, the society was administered during the first year by

CYRUS THOMPSON,..... *Vice President.*
F. CHARLES HUME,..... *Treasurer.*
DOZIER G. HERBERT, ...*Secretary.*

1872.

In 1872 the following officers were elected:

A. M. HOBBY, ...*President.*
CYRUS THOMPSON,.....*Vice President.*
ALBERT STEIN, ...*Treasurer.*
DOZIER G. HERBERT,..... .....*Secretary.*

The same gentlemen have been annually reëlected, and constitute the administration of the society in the present year, 1876.

During the year 1872 original essays were read before the society by the following gentlemen:

Maj. F. Charles Hume, of Galveston.
Rev. Wm. Howard, D.D., of Galveston.
I. M. Calloway, M.D., of Galveston.

1873.

The proceedings of 1873 exhibit original essays delivered before the society by

Dozier G. Herbert, Esq., of Galveston.
Heber Stone, Esq., of Galveston.
Rev. H. S. Thrall, of Brenham; author of *The History of Methodism in Texas.*
I. M. Calloway, M.D., of Galveston.

1874.

In this year but one address was delivered before the society, by

J. M. Walthew, Esq., of Galveston.

1875.

The annual address this year was delivered by Hon. Ashbel Smith, of Evergreen, Harris Co., Texas. Its exceeding historical value and interest induced the society to ask the distinguished author for the copy for publication. It forms the first of THE GALVESTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY SERIES of publications, to which this notice of the society itself is prefixed.

COLLECTANEA.

It is the aim of the society to receive and preserve manuscripts, printed matter, maps, and all objects that may serve to illustrate the general history of Texas, and of localities and events therein. However slight and unimportant a single letter, printed sheet, or object possessing historical interest may seem to be when considered singly; it acquires a new value when placed in position with other links in the chain of testimony to which it may properly belong. Private letters, memoranda, old newspapers, and pamphlets of little or no apparent value, always throw some light on their contemporary times.

NOTABILIA.

In this concise notice of the society, we have space only to refer to a few of the most notable objects in its collection. This we do in the hope that the mention will serve to awaken in others, the desire to place interesting private papers now in their possession, in the keeping of the organization.

Zavala Papers. 1821 to 1836.

Mr. Augustin Zavala, son of the late Lorenzo de Zavala, first vice-president of the republic of Texas, and one of the most efficient supporters of the plan of Anglo colonization, has deposited with this Historical Society a valuable portion of the private diaries and papers of his deceased father. His letter accompanying the donation says:

"In tendering these valuable records to the Galveston Historical Society, I am animated by the conviction that in your charge they will be preserved as a sacred deposit for the benefit of future students in the field of Texas and Mexican history.

"Together with the papers is a dress sword which was worn by my father when presented at the court of Louis Philippe, and a rare printed volume (Amsterdam, 1643) of Latin extracts from ancient authors speaking of Iceland and western discovery."

The list of books and papers comprised in this deposit is as follows:

Four diaries of Lorenzo de Zavala; one volume in boards, August 17, 1821, to July 31, 1826, 32 leaves; various notes 4 leaves, and March 16, 1831 to November 14, 1831, 48 leaves.

One volume in boards, March 1, 1827 to March 16, 1831, 117 leaves; and November 15, 1831, to December 30, 1831, 9 leaves.

One volume in boards, January 1, 1832 to September 16, 1835, 106 leaves; and a single entry January 18, 1836.

One stitched volume, 10 leaves, containing autograph

copies of seven letters; and entries made at San Felipe de Austin October 11, 1835 to November 10, 1835.

Letters and papers. One package, 29 letters from Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna; one package, 30 letters from José Antonio Mexia; one package, 4 letters from Antonio V. Casanova; one package, 28 letters (autograph copies) to various parties; four packages containing various memoranda on "Texas affairs," "Mexican affairs," "Letters and Documents," and "Bills and Accounts."

From the entries in his diaries it appears that Lorenzo de Zavala was born in Yucatan, it would seem at Merida, October 3, 1788, and he died November 16, 1836, at his residence on San Jacinto river, Texas.

SANTA ANNA CAPTURE. 1836.

Personal narrative of James A. Sylvester, of the capture of Gen. Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, after the battle of San Jacinto. Manuscript, 3 pp. donated by the author.

MORGAN PAPERS. 1836–1858.

230 official and private letters received, and replies to various parties, by Col. James Morgan, commanding at Galveston, 1836.

Correspondence, 176 letters and replies, between Col. James Morgan and Gen. Samuel Swartwout, 1836–1858. Donated by Francis D. Allan.

RANDALL JONES. 1786–1829.

Personal memoir of Captain Randall Jones, of Fort Bend county, Texas. With letter from R. J. Calder, manuscript, 48 pages. Donated by J. S. Sullivan.

Mier Expedition. 1842–1844.

Narrative of the Mier Expedition, by a member; Joseph D. McCutchan. Manuscript, 2 vols., 428 pp.; 22 pp. missing. Donor unknown.

Magruder Papers. 1862–1863.

Military Order Book, District of Texas; New Mexico and Arizona; General J. Bankhead Magruder commanding. Donated by Sidney T. Fontaine.

Galveston. 1864.

Register for 1864 of the male and female inhabitants of Galveston city; with name, age, nativity, occupation, term of residence, number of persons in family, and remarks. One volume, manuscript; males 44 pp.; females 34 pp. Donated by the heirs of Ferdinand Flake.

Liverpool. 1773.

An Essay towards the History of Leverpool. (*Sic.*) By William Enfield. One volume. Printed 1773. Donated by J. M. Walthew.

Maps.

Old manuscript Spanish Map of Texas and Louisiana. No date. With fifty marginal historical notes and numbers on map indicating locality. Donated by U. S. Engineer Department.

Variety.

The society also possesses a wide variety of autograph letters, biographical notices, public addresses, books,

pamphlets, newspapers, maps, archæological remains, etc.; relating to distinguished men, and notable events and localities in Texas.

LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF GALVESTON, 1876.

Ayres, De The,
Bollinger, W. P.,
Brown, James M.,
Bryan, Hon. Guy M.,
Donnelly, Hon. W. E.,
Fulton, Hon. R. Z.,
Gould, Hon. Robt. S.,
Herbert, Dozier G.,
Hobby, Hon. A. M.,
Hume, Hon. F. Chas.,
Hurford, O. P.,
Jack, Thos. M.,
Lufkin, A. P.,
McLemore, M. C.,
Montgomery, James S.,
Norris, W. B.,
Rosenberg, Henry,
Sealy, John,
Sealy, George,
Stein, Albert,
Sullivan, Hon. J. S.,
Thompson, Cyrus,
Thrasher, J. S.,
Walshe, George,
Walthew, J. M.

HONORARY MEMBERS.

Giddings, Hon. D. C.,
Smith, Hon. Ashbel,
Thrall, Rev. H. S.

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REMINISCENCES OF THE TEXAS REPUBLIC.

INTRODUCTION.

The following address is the Annual Address delivered Dec. 15, 1875, by invitation, before the Historical Society of Galveston. It was written without any expectation of present publication. It has not hitherto been the practice of the society to publish addresses delivered before it. In the society's letter of invitation, it was intimated that personal reminiscences and anecdotes characteristic of the men and times of the early history of Texas would be acceptable topics. This is mentioned to account for the introduction of some reminiscences and anecdotes. My memorandums increasing in bulk beyond my expectation, as I proceeded, the limits of an address obliged me to omit many recollections and anecdotes which I intended to present.

I beg to remind those persons who shall do me the honor to read this address, that it has not been my purpose to set forth a full history of annexation; but only to present portions of the inside history of that great measure and of the men and parties connected with it which fell within my own knowledge and personal observation — to relate facts, opinions and purposes which were better known to me than to any man now living. The work I have undertaken, whether I have succeeded in it or not, is not useless nor unimportant. Gentlemen called by the confidence of their fellow citizens to fill the highest offices in the late republic of Texas, were charged with crimes, machinations and conspiracies, which if true would destroy for their good name all claim to be esteemed honest men or patriotic citizens. The time has come for their authoritative re-

futation, and for an authoritative clearing away of the mist with which interest, suspicion, passion, prejudice and ignorance have clouded the history of a measure which brought on a mighty war in its train, made presidents of the United States, baffled aspirants to the presidency, and added a million of square miles to the territories of the mighty American union.

I have written without favor or prejudice. The lapse of more than thirty years has laid the excitement of the hour. Though not designed for present publication, the address has not been the off-hand work of an idle hour to be thrown aside. I intended to leave it a memorial for future use. I have spoken with the calmness of long retrospect and with an ever present solemn sense of impartial duty.

After the Historical Society had provided for publishing this address it was suggested to amplify it into a more complete history of annexation. To this there were two objections. The changed purpose would have necessitated the remoulding of the whole. Such a history would make a formidable volume. Accordingly the address is presented to the public as it was delivered, with scarcely verbal alterations, without additions or retrenchments. The frequent personal allusions must not be taken as evidence of the vanity that I played a decisive or conspicuous part in annexation. The invitation of the society asked for personal reminiscences. For my address I claim but one merit — that I claim without drawback or modification. IT IS TRUE.

ASHBEL SMITH.

Evergreen, Harris Co.,
Texas, January, 1876.

REMINISCENCES

OF THE

TEXAS REPUBLIC.

The annexation of Texas, from its first agitation commencing immediately after the victory of San Jacinto until its final accomplishment, was the subject for a while of absorbing national interest. It was also a measure of permanent national importance. Its influences will endure as long as the white races shall live on the continent of North America.

To the slave-holding states the incorporation of Texas into the American union commended itself as a means of restoring for a time at least their equality with the non slave-holding states in political power in the American congress. The creation of new states in the west had already destroyed this equality. The disparity was from the same cause rapidly becoming greater, soon to be overwhelming. What wonder then that to the statesmen of the south the annexation of Texas seemed a question of political prosperity or of hopeless inferiority — of political power or of political subjugation. And such political inferiority, it was apprehended, would bring in its train a profound change, a revolution in the social and industrial institutions of the south, its social degradation and its economical ruin. The

sagacious statesmen of the southern states clearly perceived the elements of the irrepressible conflict long before Mr. Seward formulated the idea into the phrase just quoted. The accession of votes which Texas coming into the Union would bring to the south in the federal congress, with corresponding power, it was hoped would stave off the evil day. The people of the south too were not unjustly alarmed at machinations, carrying on mainly in Europe, which aimed through Texas to strike a fatal blow to southern institutions.

Considerations the reverse of those just alluded to, less strong and less general, prevailed in the northern states adverse to annexation. Underlying these considerations at the north was the greed of political power, which in the largest communities, in nations as in the individual man, is whetted by possession and increase to grasp for more. Anti-slavery sentiments always existing at the north, originally most honest but dormant from respect to the rights of the states guarantied in the federal constitution before its late changes, had been long favored by British abolition emissaries from Exeter Hall, salaried by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. Under these influences there was now rapidly developing a powerful political party animated with active, aggressive hostility to the south.

In this state of things north and south, the annexation of Texas entered as an element, at times a seemingly controlling element, in great political contests for several years before its consummation. It beat Mr. Clay for the presidency — it made Mr. Polk president of the United States. I might name other similar consequences, but such are matters of very minor importance.

Not only did Texas by annexation bring an imperial domain as an accession to the already vast American republic, it was also the sole occasion of the war with Mexico; a war which resulted in the further acquisition of the great south-western Pacific ocean regions, California and adjacent territories. If we examine the newspapers, letters, addresses, pamphlets exhibiting the political history of the times, and note the intense earnestness of the discussions, persons too young to remember those times can then have only a faint idea of the absorbing interest of this subject. Mr. Robert J. Walker, secretary of the treasury, and Judge Upshur, secretary of state, published elaborate letters advocating annexation. Northern politicians denounced it in protests and official communications. It formed a prominent topic in messages of successive presidents, it was the subject of special messages to congress.

During its pendency annexation was not limited in interest nor in action to the North American continent. It gave rise to more than one European policy. It was a subject of diplomatic arrangements between the cabinets of the great powers of Western Europe, Great Britain, France and Spain. It also had its diplomatic disappointments and mortifications. To some of these arrangements and disappointments I shall allude in the course of this address. To come lower down, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, a restless humanitarian stalking horse, meddled with annexation for evil.

Will the future historian find in the annexation of Texas the first act of the mighty drama which culminated in secession, and on which the curtain fell at Appomattox Court House?

The leading external facts of annexation, if I may so speak, from its incohate agitation to its consummation, are known or may be found related more or less correctly in books. As it does not come within the scope of this address to aim at a complete history of annexation, I shall only advert very briefly to many of these facts, and the limits of an address will oblige me wholly to omit others. It is rather my purpose at this time to present sketches of the inner history, the diplomatic and personal history, the history of diplomatic movements, of parts performed by persons then at the head of affairs in Europe, in the United States, in Texas. I shall endeavor to throw some light on causes and motives little obvious to public view, little known or scarcely known at all, which bore on the progress of this great measure, and especially on its closing scenes. I shall embrace matters known to but few persons on either side of the Atlantic. For very few of the principal actors survive. General Houston, Anson Jones, Gen. Jackson, Mr. Tyler, Mr. Polk, Mr. Calhoun, Lord Aberdeen, Monsieur Guizot, Señor Garro, minister of Mexico at Paris, Don Thomas Murphy, Mexican minister at London, and not least in the part he took in these affairs, Louis Philippe, who was often his own minister, and besides these, other persons, men of power and leadership in their day and deserving well to be named in this connection — they are all dead. Peace to their ashes, all. Captain Elliot, the accomplished British minister to Texas, and the astute Count Alphonse de Saligny who represented France still survive.

A matter connected with the relations of Texas to the rest of the territories constituting the United States of America, meets us on the threshold of our subject, and

deserves consideration. A vague notion has existed that the territory of Texas, somehow or other, once belonged to the United States before annexation. Mr. Tyler permitted himself in a message to congress, treating of Texas affairs, to speak of the *re*-annexation of Texas. You may search the entire domain of history, and I assert after full, conscientious examination of all the relations of Texas, you cannot find a more utterly groundless, a more utterly unfounded claim to territory than this one in question. The United States never had even the shadow of a right, never the faintest color of title. Let us appeal to facts universally known, incontrovertible. Early Spanish navigators first discovered Texas, landed on its coast and laid claim to the country. Previously to 1595 they established settlements on both sides of the Rio Grande. This was nearly one hundred years before La Salle, the French navigator, then in search of the mouth of the Mississippi, was carried by errors of reckoning out of his course and landed on Matagorda bay. He indeed claimed the country, it is alleged, in the name of his master Louis the XIV. Immediately this accidental lodgment was known, the viceroy of Mexico sent an armed force against the party left by La Salle, broke up their settlement, hunted up the fugitive Frenchmen who had taken refuge among the Indians and put them to death. This is the whole of the French title to the territory once constituting the republic of Texas, to-day the state of Texas, which persons in the United States affected to claim as enuring to them under La Salle's settlement, as it has been termed, and by virtue of the Louisiana purchase. But the government of Spain not satisfied with this expulsion of the French intruders, as they qualified the companions of La

Salle, forthwith took steps to establish permanent military occupation of the country. Accordingly, A.D. 1698, thirteen years only afterwards, the Spanish presidio of San Antonio de Bexar was built — A.D. 1716 that of Espiritu Santo subsequently called Goliad — A.D. 1718, that of San Miguel de los Adaes on the Sabine — and, A.D. 1732, the town of Nacogdoches.

In A.D. 1742 the French post of Nachitoches being injured by an inundation of Red river, its commandant asked and obtained permission of Sandoval, commandant of the neighboring Spanish presidio of Adaes, to move some two hundred yards on to Spanish territory. For granting this permission Sandoval was immediately recalled by the viceroy of Mexico, tried by a court martial, and punished in Spanish phrase with the extreme rigor of the law — put to death. Spain thus held exclusive, unquestioned possession of Texas until A.D. 1763, when by the *family compact*, as it was called, that power became possessor of Louisiana by cession from France. In A.D. 1800 by the treaty of San Ildefonso, Louisiana was retroceded to France "with the same extent it had while in the possession of France." In A.D. 1803 the United States purchased Louisiana territory from France. Coveting Texas they subsequently applied to France to support their claim to the Rio Grande. Instead of sustaining this pretension the French government affirmed the title of Spain to the country west of the Sabine. Bonapart was then consul. Talleyrand, minister for foreign affairs, in his reply to the application of the United States, took occasion to hint more modesty in their demands. Matters remained thus until A.D., 1819. In the treaty of that year with Spain, the United States recognized the

country of Texas as belonging of right to Spain; and they renounced forever for themselves all claim to the territories lying south and west of the line forming the boundary of Texas on the north and north-east at the time of annexation.

I have brought with me for inspection by members of the society, curious in these matters, a "Map of North America, with the West India Islands," published in London, February, A.D. 1777. It is stated to be "laid down according to the latest surveys and corrected from the original materials of Governor Pownall, member of parliament." Mr. Edward Everett said to me that it is known by the name of Governor Pownall's map, that it is very rare, and that the one before you is one of the only three copies he had heard of. He had given his own copy to the commission for running the north-eastern boundary between the United States and the British possessions. The map before us was obtained in the city of Mexico, when that city was in possession of the American armies under General Scott. You may observe that the Sabine is both dotted and colored throughout its entire course to indicate the boundary between Mexico and Louisiana. The lower portion of the Sabine is here called the Mexicano, the upper portions the Rio de los Adiais.

Was it then not worse than idle for President Tyler, in a message to congress, to speak of annexation as "reclaiming a territory formerly constituting a portion of the United States," and to style it *re*annexation? with the implied idea that the people of Texas were only tenants at will, and not owners of our country, and that annexation was only a restoration, a reconveyance to the American union of what was once rightfully a part of it?

I have dwelt at some length on this preliminary portion of our subject, but not more than the vindication of truth demands, not more than is required by justice to the old citizens of Texas, who won this land with their swords, and who have a right to be truthfully represented before the world and before posterity.

As we have Governor Pownall's map before us, we may note that on the region between our north-eastern boundary and the Colorado, we find TICAS in capital letters. It is impossible to determine whether this is the name of a region of country or of its aboriginal inhabitants. The type is the same as that used elsewhere on the map to designate districts of country and also Indian tribes. Is it Indian or Spanish in its origin? Is it the name of an aboriginal tribe and the origin of the Spanish *Texas* or *Tejas* — is it the English spelling of the Spanish *Texas* or Tejas? It is clearly the same word as the present Texas; but I fear the etymology of the Latin word is still hopeless despite the waste we have witnessed, of learning and conjecture.[1]

If I do not tire your patience with preliminary matters I will relate some incidents which for a while seemed likely to launch Texas on a widely different career from the one it has followed.

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[1] Dr. John Gilmary Shea, the learned and conscientious translator of *The History and General Description of New France*, by the Rev. P. F. X. de Charlevoix, S. J., Vol. IV, page 80, note, says: "Father Morfi includes under the name of Texas (which he explains as Texia, *friends* the Texas, Asinais, Navedachos, Nagcodoches, Nacogdoches, Nadocogs Ahijites, Codogdachos, and Nasonis. These Texas, in 1761, were governed by Sanate Adivia (Great Lady), a chieftainess with four husbands." Father Morfi's *Memorias para la Historia de la Provincia de Texas*, are still in manuscript.—*Galv. Hist. Society.*

More than thirty years ago I met repeatedly in Paris a personage very noted in European history during the early years of the present century. The Prince of Peace, Il Principe de la Paz, Don Manuel Godoy. This personage said to me that his master Charles IV, king of Spain, had bestowed on him the province of Texas to be an apanage of the house of Godoy. The king had also assigned to him the young women in the Female Asylums of Spain to go thither — that is to come hither — together with 2000 soldiers, for the settlement and permanent inhabitation of this, our present state of Texas. The soldiers were designated, the transports were being got in readiness to sail. The French invasion of Spain, under Napoleon, at this moment, made the soldiers needed at home. The enterprise was arrested. The Spanish damsels were restored to their asylums. The mighty events in Spain following in quick succession and involving nearly all Europe prevented the enterprise of Godoy from being ever resumed. There appears no reason for doubting Godoy's narrative. The whole was a fitting incident in the history of the Spanish court during those hideous times. When I used to see Godoy, then seventy-six or seventy-eight years old, he still exhibited traces of that beauty of Antinous which more than thirty years before had wrought the infamy of the court in which he ruled, the all powerful favorite of the queen as well as of the king. When I met him, Prince Godoy was living in very plain apartments on the fifth story in a small street near the boulevard. His sole means of subsistence in his age and in his poverty, he said to me, was 5000 francs paid to him annually by King Louis Philippe — a salary he was once entitled to as a grand officer of the legion of honor. I sometimes saw him wrapped in a Spanish cloak,

sauntering solitary on the boulevards, gazing at the things displayed in the shop-windows.

The great battle of the old Texians for life, for freedom, for their homes and for their altars, culminated in victory on San Jacinto. When pausing from this death-struggle they contemplated their situation and cast about for the future; their home government and their external political relations thenceforward naturally occupied the foremost place in their counsels. To resume any union with Mexico on any guaranties whatever, in view of the causes which had impelled them to take up arms, was a folly not to be thought of. From Mexico they were effectually and forever separated. So far as concerned that country they felt themselves forever independent. They had won and well could keep their lands. But other matters equally grave demanded attention. They put in operation a provisional government for immediate use. The next pressing business was to obtain the recognition of their independence by the nations of the world, and to establish permanent international relations for Texas. The two objects were inseparable. Should they look to founding a permanently separate, independent state, with a population so meagre in numbers? Bold in battle, they were modest in council. Accordingly at the first election of officers under their new constitution, polls were also opened for votes *for* or *against* annexation to the United States. The vote for annexation was almost unanimous.

Application was made by Texas to the American government for their recognition of our independence. The

resolution for recognition in the American senate was barely passed by a vote of 23 to 22. Had the taking of the vote been deferred to the next day it would have been decided in the negative. For a motion to reconsider, made that day, was lost by a tie vote, 24 to 24 — a full senate. A year lacking a few days had elapsed since the overwhelming victory of San Jacinto. Mexico appeared unable to make then even an effort. It was a year lacking two short months since General President Santa Anna had by solemn treaty acknowledged the independence of Texas. A young man at this day may well be pardoned for feeling surprise that party prejudice and unreasoning fanaticism should have so perilled before the American senate the acknowledgment of what was after all simply an obvious fact.

The proposition for annexation presented to the American secretary of state, Mr. Forsyth, was at once categorically declined. The application was withdrawn by President Houston. The Texas commissioner sent to England and France, negotiated treaties with those powers. These are matters of published history: I need not dwell on them.

In accordance with the intimation that personal reminiscences characteristic of those times will be interesting I will relate here an incident illustrative of the times and of President Houston.

San Antonio was much the largest, richest, most influential city of Texas of that period. It was remote from the seat of the Texian government. There was no intervening population between it and the Mexican frontier. For its protection and that of the country, a considerable squadron of cavalry was stationed in that city. This squadron was in-

deed the only military force of Texas kept mobilized — that was ready to take the field. Major Western, who commanded this body of cavalry, had by some acts and significant inuendos intimated that he cared very little for the one horse government in the city of Houston. President Houston was apprehensive that an order to recall the major or to relieve him might be disobeyed. It was announced publicly that a minister would be appointed to represent Texas at the court of St. James. Col. Wm. H. Patton was going to San Antonio on his own private business. President Houston, in a long and friendly conversation with Col. Patton, at length adverted as by accident to the proposed mission to England. He spoke of Major Western, lauded his polished manners, his courtly address, his diplomatic ability — said the major reminded him strongly of Mr. Van Buren — asked Col. Patton what he thought of the appointment of Major Western to this mission. All this he begged Col. Patton to hold in strict confidence — "nothing was absolutely determined on" — "Col. Patton need not be surprised at anything." The president, waiting till he heard of Col. Patton's arrival in San Antonio, sent through the war department orders to Major Western to report in person at the seat of government. The major presented himself in Houston radiant and decorous as Titus at the head of the Roman legions organized for the conquest of Jerusalem. Time rolled on. The major became visibly impatient despite the gracious accord with which President Houston greeted him. At length he began to inquire very quietly who was to be appointed to England — he inquired of your speaker who was a member of Houston's staff — but Ashbel Smith "knew nothing of cabinet matters, he was not a member of the cabinet." Finally,

instructions were being made out in the state department and Gen. Pinckney Henderson was making preparations to leave for London. The rumor leaked out — "the major would not believe it" — "President Houston had better indgment of men" — "what did Henderson know of diplomacy." The appointment of Gen. Henderson became an established fact. The major "was disgusted" — "he would go back to San Antonio" — and so he did, but he found his successor there well established in command of the cavalry. Referring to this matter at the time, Gen. Houston said to your speaker that he would have no pronunciamentos of the Mexican fashion in Texas during his presidency. During his second presidency he had to confront and ward off the far more perilous danger of two pronunciamentos which were threatened and which might have proved disastrous but for his consummate tact in charming them down. Recurring to the incident just related, Gen. Houston at a subsequent time provided comfortably for his disappointed old friend, the major, by placing him at the head of the Indian bureau.

Treaties with the two great powers of western Europe, England and France, appear to have been negotiated without any serious obstacle. There were indeed some curious incidents connected with the French negotiations which our limits to-night prevent me from relating.

The votes of the American senate on recognition and on the motion to reconsider when carefully examined being adverse to Texas, the prompt and unmitigated rejection of the application for annexation by Mr. Forsyth, American secretary of state, seemed to put an end to all prospect of Texas forming a portion of the American union.

The term of General Houston's presidency expired in December, 1838. He was succeeded by Mirabeau B. Lamar, a gentleman distinguished for chivalric courage, spotless integrity and pure patriotism. The subject of annexation was indeed at rest. Opposition to it was the avowed policy of the new administration. Events of grave moment at the time took place during General Lamar's presidency, but none having immediate, direct bearing on annexation. It is sufficient for our purpose at this time merely to advert to some of these; we need not dwell on them. A ridiculous affair that should never have been suffered to be heard of, the killing of a pig at a horse trough, embroiled the administration of Texas with M. de Saligny, the French minister. This gentleman demanded his passports, suspended diplomatic intercourse, and left the country during the rest of Gen. Lamar's administration. The ill advised Santa Fé expedition ended in almost ignominious disaster. The finances of the country, always a sure index of national prosperity or of adversity, were at the lowest possible ebb. The public debt was increased enormously, several hundred *per centum* — not a dollar in the treasury — public credit absolutely null — its *redbacks* issued on the faith of the republic had fallen in nominal value to three or four cents on the dollar and were used only in fancy traffic or wilder speculations. Mr. McIntosh, who had been left by Gen. Henderson on his return to Texas, as *chargé d' affaires* at Paris, was suffered to remain there through sheer neglect, his salary unpaid, himself sorely embarrassed by want of means of subsistence. Gen. Lamar's administration was not a success. The country had not improved. The Indian tribes on our frontier, friendly under the pre-

ceding administration, had become exasperated and hostile. Texas had not grown in the esteem of nations.

During this administration Gen. James Hamilton, representing Texas in Europe, had negotiated with the British government a *convention*, in which it was stipulated that Texas would assume £1,000,000 of the debt due from Mexico to the English holders of its bonds, when the British government by its good offices with Mexico should obtain peace and the recognition of Texian independence by Mexico. British statesmen were sincerely desirous for the prosperity of Texas and the firm establishment of its independence. This was the moving cause of the successful negotiation of this convention of mediation, in such untoward circumstances at home.

General Houston's second administration as president was inaugurated amid this general dilapidation. His first care was the finances. The system of exchequers limited in amount not to exceed $200,000 was adopted to meet immediate wants. They were denounced as a revival of old redbacks under a new name. Despite ill boding vaticinations of speedy worthlessness, despite the virulent and contemptuous hostility and machinations of speculators and bankers combined, mostly residents of Galveston, the exchequers, after temporary depression below their face value, rose to full par with gold and continued at par till the end of the republic. They were freely received in exchange for American eagles, English sovereigns and French napoleons. During the latter period of the republic they were in little use. They accomplished their object. Texas enjoyed practically a currency of gold. Gen. Houston stated to your speaker, at the time of the

first issuance of exchequers, that he alone was responsible for the system — that in this matter, his secretary of the treasury was only a clerk.

The French imbroglio demanded early attention. Your speaker was the bearer of a letter from the state department to the French government which, adverting to the difficulty only to ignore it, expressed a wish that M. de Saligny should return to his post in Texas. This gentleman did so. This was the end of the imbroglio. Admiral Baudin afterwards informed me in France that M. de Saligny on this account was in bad odor at the foreign office — *très mal noté aux Affaires Etrangères*. France might afford to do wrong, she could not submit to be rendered ridiculous. The imbroglio, absurd in its origin, might have led to disagreeable consequences. Your speaker who was authorized to permit M. de Saligny to take a copy of the letter from the state department just alluded to, met in company with this gentleman in New Orleans, Captain Renard of the French navy, commanding the ship of war La Brillante, M. de Saligny informed him that Captain Renard with his ship were there subject to his orders. On reading the letter, M. de Saligny had no orders to give.

Ratified copies of the treaty negotiated by Gen. Henderson and of the *convention* negotiated by Gen. Hamilton, both with Great Britain, had not been exchanged. Your speaker, then newly appointed minister of Texas to England and France, was charged with the exchange of ratified copies of these instruments. On his arrival in London in April, 1842, he learned that two war steamers were building in British ports and nearly completed for Mexico and to be employed against Texas. They were the Guadalupe, an iron steamer building by

Messrs. Laird at Berkenhead on the Mersey opposite Liverpool. She was very strong, drew only four feet with her armament aboard, constructed to operate on the coast of Texas and to ravage the coast country. The other war steamer was the Montezuma, a larger vessel of deeper draught, building by Messrs. Green and Wigram in the India docks on the Thames near London. These war steamers were contracted for by M. Lizardi, Mexican consul at London, avowedly for the war against Texas. I could not ascertain whether or not Mexico had been able to raise money for building these vessels by negotiating a loan. A rumor in London gave out that the steamers were paid for with money furnished to General Santa Anna by the Mexican clergy. I also heard some time afterwards that the English holders of Mexican bonds had enabled Mexico to make an additional loan of £200,000. However that may be, it was too unimportant a matter to be worth inquiring into afterwards when the fact might have been ascertained. My clear opinion at the time was that the abolitionists of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society rendered the most zealous countenance and aid to Mexico in this attempt at a renewal of active hostilities against Texas. Whether they made contributions in money or how much or whether they lent their powerful influence only is of no moment. As a general fact these abolition leaders were much more liberal with their influence than with their own money. They were remorseless enemies of Texas to the last.

I have spoken of the building of these war steamers in England, though having at first blush so little apparent connection with the future relations of Texas, because they became closely connected with the first or opening

scene, if they did not indeed constitute its leading incident, of the last act of the drama of annexation. For four years from the peremptory rejection of the application of Texas by Mr. Secretary Forsyth, annexation had lain at rest, sometimes alluded to, but practically in indefinite abeyance. From this time forward there was no real pause in its agitation until it was forever sealed by vote of the citizens of Texas, A.D. 1845.

The British cabinet on the application of General Henderson, commissioner of Texas for the admission of the republic of Texas into the family of nations, recognized with reasonable, graceful promptness Texas as a nation, and entitled to all the courtesies and rights due and belonging to all sovereign nations. They desired that Texas should continue a separate, independent nation and government. They made no secret of their wish nor of their reasons for this wish. On the contrary these reasons were frankly avowed.

They were in substance — Texas was a purely agricultural country. For obvious causes agriculture would for a long period constitute the main pursuit of its people, however numerous they might become. They would of course be large consumers of foreign manufactures. The freight of these and of raw materials in exchange for them would give employment to a considerable commercial marine. Great Britain desired to find in Texas a market for her merchandize "without having to climb over the United States tariff." These are Lord Aberdeen's words to me. Texas was known to be the best cotton growing country in the world — it was of immense extent — it was now in the hands of a people energetic, civilized, who would utilize its vast capabilities instead of

allowing them to remain sterile as they had been for three centuries under Spanish rule. Great Britain consumed millions of bales of cotton. They wished not to be almost wholly dependent as they then were on supplies from the United States. Their statesmen made no secret of their willingness to see an independent state established on the south-western border of the American union which should arrest its further extension in that direction and prevent encroachment on the territories of Mexico.

The foreign commerce of Mexico had been long done mostly with or through British merchants — its mines of silver and gold were worked with British capital — their rich yields of the precious metals reached the world through British merchants. That government naturally wished to preserve this field of British enterprise against encroachment by a powerful neighbor. The British cabinet knew that Mexico could never subjugate Texas. They desired peace for Mexico as well as for Texas; for only in peace could the industrial and commercial interests just alluded to prosper. You see herein, gentlemen, a policy that might be honestly entertained and honorably avowed. It worked no injustice to other nations. There was neither secrecy nor the affectation of secrecy. The American minister at London during this period, Mr. Edward Everett, as the minister of the nation most friendly to Texas, was made acquainted with the details of the intercourse and business of the Texian minister with the British cabinet. It was eminently proper that a frank and good understanding should subsist between the American and Texian ministers at the British court. Other reasons requiring there should be a full and frank understanding between them arose afterwards.

At no time, in no manner, did the British government attempt to exercise or even hint the remotest wish to exercise any political influence in the affairs of Texas, or to possess any advantage, obtain any facility, enjoy any privilege that was not equally and as fully accorded to every other power in amity with Texas.

I have already spoken of the *convention* negotiated under Gen. Lamar's administration stipulating for the mediation of Great Britain with Mexico. I reached London in April, 1842, bearing ratified copies of this *convention* and of the general treaty previously negotiated, to be exchanged on behalf of Texas for similar copies from the British government. Before my arrival, the minister for foreign affairs, Lord Aberdeen, not waiting for the exchange of ratifications, had instructed Mr. Packenham, British minister at Mexico, to bring the proffer of mediation before that power. Considerable correspondence had taken place. The Mexican government categorically refused to entertain the question of peace on any terms into which the independence of Texas entered. Señor Tornel, one of the cabinet but not of the foreign department, assured Mr. Packenham that no man, no party in Mexico, could admit the independence of Texas for a moment and sustain themselves. Such was the information of Lord Aberdeen to the Texian minister relative to mediation under the *convention*.

The ratified treaties were exchanged with Lord Aberdeen in face of urgent remonstrances by the anti-slavery abolitionists and in disregard of a caution obtruded by a Mr. Doran Maillard. This Mr. Maillard had just published a voluminous libel of 500 or 600 pages on Texas, its climate, its productions and its people.

It has been already stated that there were building at this time in England for Mexico two powerful war steamers. They were nearly ready to sail and formed part of ample preparations making by Mexico to subjugate Texas. They carried each, two 68-pounders Paixhan pivot guns, besides lighter armament and small arms. Their munitions of war and supplies for men were in quantities extended into cargo. In the words of Mr. Laird about the Guadalupe which was built by his house, "they were armed to the teeth." They were commanded by two distinguished British officers, Captain Cleveland and Captain Charlewood of the royal navy. They were manned by British seamen mostly recruited in London and Portsmouth.

An energetic protest with details of the facts was promptly addressed by the Texian minister to the minister for foreign affairs against this violation of neutrality by permitting the building and arming of vessels of war and the organization of hostile expeditions in British ports against Texas, a country in amity with Great Britain. The British cabinet acted tardily and with seeming great reluctance in forbidding these vessels to sail from their ports armed, loaded with military supplies, manned by British seamen avowedly for the Mexican service against Texas. They were also slow in forbidding their gallant officers just named from taking active service under Mexico against Texas. In the case there were some embarrassing circumstances. The models of these steamers had been furnished by the British admiralty. The admiralty had also granted permission to the officers in question to take temporary service in the Mexican navy. Such permission was not unusual. Permission had been given not many years previously to British officers to take service in the internal

war of Spain and in a similar war in Portugal. The several acts complained of in the protest of the Texas minister, the armament, the taking of foreign service by officers, the recruiting of men in Great Britain for foreign service were not necessarily violations of British municipal law. The Act 59, George III, commonly styled the foreign enlistment act, conferred full discretionary power on the council in such matters.

It was only after several protests presented on each new development of facts connected with these hostile steamers that the government acted decisively. The Guadalupe, some time detained, was not permitted to sail until she had discharged her armament. The Montezuma was arrested, examined by order of the admiralty, and compelled to discharge her recruits and her armament before sailing. Captain Cleveland and Captain Charlewood were permitted to go in command of the ships, but were officially notified that if they took any part in operations against Texas they would be gazetted, struck from the rolls of her majesty's service.

President Houston, referring to the earnestness of these protests and apprehensive that the zeal of the Texas minister might outrun his discretion, wrote to him a private letter, advising that "when your hand is in the lion's mouth it is safest to withdraw it quietly without slapping the lion on his nose."

It is not out of place, perhaps, in these reminiscences to mention a matter and an incident which, though not strictly germane to our subject, may be deemed somewhat interesting as illustrative of the times in question. The opinion was expressed to me by gentlemen of high standing in England, it was more positively asserted in high

political circles in Paris, that the unsettled relations between the United States and Great Britain, rendering war not very improbable, was a motive of tardy action in the case of the Mexican war steamers. For, it was averred, in the event of such war Mexico would be dragged in on the side of England. It was shortly after the affair of the steamers that Lord Aberdeen did the Texas minister the honor to inquire his opinion on the sentiments prevailing in the United States on the Oregon and north-western boundary question and "Mr Polk's 54° 40′, or fight."

In the conversation Lord Aberdeen remarked that the British government did not care a pin, comparatively, about Oregon and the Puget sound country; but that the universal conviction in England was that the country to the Columbia river belonged of right to Great Britain and that the United States was attempting to bully England out of it. He further stated that public feeling in that country had become so excited on this subject, that were the queen's ministers to take any step showing a disposition to submit to the American pretension, a motion of want of confidence would within twenty-four hours be introduced in parliament, and Lord John Russell would come in as a war minister. It was thought by your speaker that Lord Aberdeen made this statement advisedly that it might be communicated to Mr. Everett, the American minister. It was so communicated to this gentleman.

The leaders of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, wielding much of the influence of their numerous affiliated associations and of their emissaries scattered abroad, were entered into the affairs of Texas and Mexico with the energy of fanaticism on the side of Mexico for the subjugation of Texas. Other things appeared to con-

spire with them favorably for Mexico. Mr. Packenham stated in his dispatches, as Lord Aberdeen informed me, that Mexico counted on the assistance of Spain. Shortly afterwards I learned from a high official source, in Paris, that Spain had dispatched a man-of-war to the West Indies to be in readiness to act with Mexico, and also had promised much more additional naval support. On the strength of this information I sought an interview with General Sancho, Spanish minister in London. I intimated to him distinctly that Spain, taking part with Mexico in this war, could not fail to become embroiled with the United States. I ventured to suggest that a better course would be for Spain and Texas to establish friendly and commercial relations by treaty, adding that I was furnished with powers to conclude such treaty. General Sancho replied, that he had no information on this subject — diplomatically he did not choose to have any. He added that the captain general of Cuba was in the habit of taking important steps on his own judgment, without consulting the home government. I left him entertaining no doubt of the correctness of my information, and of General Sancho's knowledge of the whole matter. Santa Anna's peremptory rejection of British mediation, Señor Tornel's semi-official declaration to Mr. Packenham, already mentioned, and the cooperation of Spain enlisted by Mexico, leave no room to doubt that Mexico was in savage earnest to subjugate Texas.

To show how far reaching were the schemes connected with Mexico, it will not be wholly out of place here to relate a statement made by Louis Philippe, in a conversation I had the honor to have with him in 1843. The king was pleased to say that they — he did not indicate who

"they" were — that "they" had asked him for one of his sons as a prince to place on the throne of Mexico. He continued with almost eager emphasis, "They shall never have a son of mine." Pointing towards England — the newspapers had just announced that the queen was in a delicate situation — I said if there continue to be rapid accessions to the queen's family as hitherto, England might spare a prince and their exchequer be none the worse for it. He quickly rejoined, "That will never do. That will never do; the queen's sons are protestants, the Mexicans are catholics." On my adverting to what might be the views of Spain and England relative to the proposed establishment of a monarchy in Mexico; the king observed: "Spain is willing or favors it. England has nothing to say, makes no objection, does not appear to care about it." Was I authorized to suspect strongly that Spain was the leading power in this scheme, and that it was connected with the frigate sent and the further aid promised to Mexico? Was this scheme the embryo of the empire of Maximilian?

The projected campaign of Mexico in 1842, for subjugating Texas, had proved a failure. On the side of Texas, our finances were in a deplorable state, our credit was not yet revived; serious difficulties had arisen withthe volunteers who came to Texas that year, and who might form the nucleus of a military power; our internal condition was not solid and harmonious. Mr. Packenham informed his government that these facts were well known and

counted on in Mexico. But Mexico was not ready. Serious delay had been imposed on the sailing of the war steamers — restrictions had been laid on their commanders — when at length these vessels reached Vera Cruz, they were not armed, supplied, manned and officered, as it had been arranged they should be.

The Hamilton convention proving a hopeless failure, President Houston instructed your speaker to invite the governments of France and Great Britain to join with the United States in a triple representation to Mexico in behalf of peace. The British government at once signified their readiness so far as related to themselves alone. They declined to act jointly with the United States. The relations of the United States with Mexico were such as to preclude the belief that their participation would further the objects of the proposed representation. France, both the king and Mons. Guizot, accepted the invitation with graceful promptness. But the British government eventually declined to act jointly with any other power. Their good offices were urged with great earnestness on Mexico, singly. They appeared to have no immediate results, but doubtless told at a later day on the course then adopted by Mexico.

I will here relate an incident illustrative of diplomatic intercourse and an instance of masterly silence. In consequence of a conversation I had with the British minister for foreign affairs, long extracts from two dispatches were subsequently placed in my hands in Downing street for perusal. The first was a dispatch from the British foreign office, embodying a very forcible argument to show why Mexico should at once make peace with Texas on the basis of independence. Mr. Packenham was instructed

to read this dispatch to the Mexican government. The second was from Mr. Packenham's dispatch in reply, acquainting his government of his having executed his instructions. He stated that a special audience was appointed for communicating to the Mexican secretary of state the dispatch in question. He read the dispatch to Mr. Bocanegra, who, he remarked, understood English as well as he himself did — he read with great distinctness and deliberation, giving full force to the argument. Señor Bocanegra listened with profound attention — in perfect silence — betrayed not the slightest emotion in any way during the reading. The reading concluded, Mr. Packenham having nothing to add, was himself silent. Señor Bocanegra sat for a minute or more, silent, thoughtful, motionless. Then with his usual calm courtesy he addressed Mr. Packenham on matters having no relation whatever to the subject of the dispatch. Mr. Packenham, a diplomatist of no mean ability, of much experience, added that he could not form an opinion of what influence or whether any was produced by the dispatch on the Mexican secretary of state.

I now proceed to speak of matters occurring in 1843. Upwards of a year had now elapsed since the second administration of President Houston had been inaugurated. Texas had acquired in a marked degree the respect of the great European powers, and their confidence in the stability of our institutions and in our ability to maintain our independence. Mexico had been signally baffled in her attempts to renew on a respectable scale hostilities against Texas. The trouble with the volunteers had been conjured down, and tranquility reigned within. Peace with the Indian tribes and the security of our frontier had been

restored without subsidy, by the good faith of Gen. Houston in dealing with these aboriginal owners of the domain. The exchequers, the paper currency of the country, had reached nearly par with gold and were still rising. Not a single dollar had been piled on the mass of public debt previously incurred. This prosperity of Texas was duly reported by the British and French ministers resident here, and by European gentlemen of standing who visited Texas; and it was fully believed on the other side of the Atlantic. The confidence thus inspired naturally led the great powers of Europe, I allude especially to England and in a scarcely less degree to France, to regard Texas with much favor and to wish to establish and to extend solid relations with us. They appreciated our immense natural resources for producing raw materials and consequently our means for trade. It was their interest to foster our developing industrial greatness. These powers knew it. They had the sense to know and to act on the knowledge, that in establishing and strengthening our political relations and in favoring the settlement of our political affairs, they were promoting our industrial development and at the same time, by consequence, their own commercial interests. Other European powers signified their readiness to establish international relations by treaty with Texas. The very favorable changes in the affairs of Texas which I have adverted to, were not attributed to accident, were not considered as results of that vague something sometimes called good luck. They were esteemed the legitimate effects of the sound judgment, the practical good sense, the capacity for administration of Gen. Houston. This is not an inferential opinion of mine. It was the mature opinion expressed to me more than once by high officials

with whom I transacted business on the other side of the Atlantic.

Do you ask why I mention such matters? Do you inquire what connection they have with the fortunes of Texas?

This good feeling in Europe thus honestly and honorably acquired, the disposition in consequence manifested by those powers to promote and foster Texas, their untiring efforts to procure honorable peace for Texas though their good offices were repeatedly rejected by Mexico, were openly invoked by persons in the highest offices in the United States, President Tyler in the number, as proof conclusive that General Houston and his administration, and Anson Jones who succeeded him in the presidency of Texas, were plotting to sell Texas to an European power. That they were engaged in a deliberate conspiracy to sell Texas to England. I may here somewhat anticipate the mention of events, which I propose to relate further on more succinctly, by a brief statement.

Evidences of the confidence inspired and the friendly disposition entertained by foreign powers, reaching Texas at that time, were then hailed with hearty satisfaction by the people of Texas. They were afterwards revived, gravely commented on, and avouched as proofs of a long contemplated conspiracy against Texas and against a broad continental American policy, not only by heated politicians, but they were tortured to mislead honest minded gentlemen. Yet all this while, up to the last moment of the incorporation of the republic of Texas into the American union, no European power ever even hinted, much less did any one propose, any political advantage or influence, or any political relation whatever, nor sought any commercial facility which should not on the same terms be equally

open to the world. I surely need not add at this time of day, that no such thought even entered the minds of the gentlemen who administered the affairs of Texas during the period in question. Had there been even a shadow of anything of the kind, I must, from my official position, needs have known it. It may, too, seem *aliunde* the record of Texas history, to vindicate the integrity and loyal honesty of European cabinets in their dealings with Texas. But, be pleased to bear in mind that the vindication of these cabinets is at the same time the vindication of the honored chief officers of the republic of Texas. You, my younger hearers, may think it scarcely worth while to rake up now forgotten calumnies. Recollect that history is compiled by searching old documents, contemporary publications, and journals of public bodies. Charges against Sam Houston and against Anson Jones, against persons in high official position at home and persons representing Texas abroad, charges, I say, of political dishonesty, of treasonable purposes, of treasonable correspondence, of conspiracy against the weal of the republic of Texas, found frequent place in the *Houston Telegraph* and in the *Galveston News* of those days: in fugitive pamphlets, in published letters of distinguished United States politicians, and in some American newspapers, notably in the subsidized *Picayune* of New Orleans. Motions and resolutions implying ground for belief in charges of this nature, were introduced in the Texian congress and still stand among the printed journals of those bodies. Possibly but for the latter I might have left these stale calumnies to perish, to be forgotten, of their own worthlessness. It is one of the painful things in human nature, that in the great struggles for human rights and

for liberty, the principal actors entertain the worst suspicions and make grave charges against each other. Contemplate Thomas Jefferson and John Adams.

Neither the cause of Texas, neither its independence, nor annexation, were viewed with favor in the northern states. Opposition to its incorporation into the union was almost universal in those states. The votes on recognition as it is termed, and annexation, twice tendered and twice spurned, furnish proof of these facts. At length however, at a somewhat later period, a pretty strong party friendly to annexation grew up there. The belief that a plan was organized or at least on foot in Great Britain to meddle with the institution of slavery in the south, in Texas first and as preliminary to meddling with and abolishing it in the then southern states, more probably than all other causes, led to the creation of the party in the northern states friendly to Texas. The same belief united the entire masses of the southern people. From the declaration of independence one hundred years ago up to a very recent time, nothing so powerfully stirred up, aroused simultaneously, the American people north and south, as the suspicion of British interference in American affairs. The belief that the purpose was entertained in England to abolish the institution of slavery in Texas, as the opening campaign of a crusade against this institution in the then United States, was the strongest original ground work of the movement which was consummated in annexation. Did there exist, in fact, real ground for this suspicion, this belief? Was it truth or was it a chimera? Was it a Trojan horse filled with armed men, or was it an unreal mockery of a huge monster evoked by politicians to practice on the people? Mr. Thomas H. Benton, in his

Thirty Years in the American Senate, has affected to sneer at the whole subject of an anti-slavery movement in England. How far his hatred of Mr. Calhoun and of other gentlemen, misled that very able and very prejudiced statesman, cannot be ascertained. But it requires an abler man than he to sneer down or rail off the seal of truth from established facts.

I shall first make a brief succinct statement, that we may not confound in one mass persons and parties unlike and wholly disconnected in action, in the matters we have now under consideration.

There existed at the time in question, it still exists for aught I know, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, having its seat in London, with numerous affiliated societies in Great Britain and other countries. The leaders of the society in question were meddlesome, restless, unscrupulous traffickers in spurious humanitarianism. They entered with savage eagerness into the cause of Mexico at an early period against Texas; they promoted the building and fitting out of the Mexican war steamers designed to ravage the coasts of Texas, as has been stated; they did not pause or relax in their machinations to the last moment. With these individuals I believe the British cabinet, of which Sir Robert Peel was chief and in which Lord Aberdeen was minister for foreign affairs, had no sympathy: and for these individuals I believe these gentlemen had no respect. But opinion is free in Great Britain. The British ministry has no more control over such men than Mr. Secretary Upshur had over the Lloyd Garrisons, the Wendell Phillipses and John Browns of the northern states. The British ministry wanted peace: peace everywhere, peace in Mexico, peace for Texas, peace with the United States;

unhampered commerce with all, and in connection with this view the prosperity of all. The opinion I then formed of the loyal integrity of the leading members of the British cabinet of that period, is confirmed by a calm retrospect after these long years. Nor does the calming influence of time abate aught of the detestation I then had, for the abolitionists whom I have just alluded to. For them, history has but one parallel. The inquisitors of the Spanish inquisition burnt their victim at the stake for the good of his soul.

In my remarks at this time, about these parties, I restrict myself to matters and actions of theirs bearing on and closely connected with Texas.

In 1839, an early period as you see in the history of Texas, and some four years before the period under our immediate consideration, Mr. Daniel O'Connell published a letter having reference to Texas and its institutions. In this letter Mr. O'Connell pledges himself to introduce in the ensuing session of parliament certain motions. One was: "That an address be presented to her majesty, humbly praying that she may be pleased to give directions to her ministers, to endeavor to make such an arrangement with the government of Mexico as would place at their disposal such a portion of the unoccupied territory of that republic, on or near its northern boundary —" to wit: "embracing the republic of Texas — as should be sufficient for the purpose of establishing an asylum or free state of persons of color, her majesty's subjects, who may be desirous to emigrate to and establish such free state." The republic of Texas, forsooth, a portion of the republic of Mexico three full years after the achievement of our independence, and the expulsion of every person owning

allegiance to Mexico from our territory!! Texas "unoccupied" though having lived three full years under a peaceful government of law at home and recognized as an independent nation abroad!!! The impudent coolness is worthy of the individual who penned the letter, and its falsehood and iniquity are characteristic of the persons who inspired it.

In June, 1843, Lord Aberdeen informed me that two Texians had presented themselves at the foreign office, claiming to be representatives from Texas, and stating that they had important propositions to submit from the people of Texas to the queen's government. They asseverated that these propositions, looking to the prompt abolition of slavery in Texas, were sanctioned by leading citizens. Lord Aberdeen turned them over to the under secretary, Mr. Addington, until he should have an interview with the accredited minister of Texas. This interview, at Lord A's invitation, took place promptly. These two self-appointed representatives were Mr. Stephen Pearl Andrews, previously an attorney in Texas, and Mr. Lewis Tappan, one of the notorious Tappan brothers of New York city. The latter individual had never been in Texas. Lord Aberdeen, on being informed that these individuals were meddlesome intruders and not representatives of any opinion or policy in Texas, said "they will not be again received here at all." They never were again admitted to an interview with any member of the foreign office. These men had approached the foreign office on the personal introductions, and on false pretenses, under the auspices of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.

The objects and policy of the anti-slavery society in their machinations and crusade against Texas were pal-

pable, unmistakable. Slavery being declared abolished in Mexico, the subjugation of Texas by Mexico was *ipso facto*, by organic law, its abolition in Texas. A free negro colony or state on the south-western frontier of the union, as projected and as set forth in the letter I have quoted from of Mr. O'Connell, would be a refuge and rendezvous for runaway negroes from the southern states. A wound would be opened in the vitals of southern institutions; a free negro state here would be an eternal festering thorn in the side of the United States on their most exposed flank. It would serve as a base of incalculable power and convenience for hostile operations in the event of war, which could not have been long averted. This intent, these purposes, this perspective, commended the cause of Mexico to the remorseless fanatics of whom I am now speaking. The Mexican war steamers, English built, armed, manned and officered, as before related, chimed with their schemes. But enough of that enterprise. Aiming at Texas first, at the southern states afterwards, these wretched pedlers in humanity were plotting to crush out the Anglo Saxon race in Texas; to remand this fair land back to the wilderness and barbarism of three centuries; to deluge the southern states with blood; to immolate a people sprung from a common country, speaking the same language, having in the main the same political institutions; that they might lift up a free negro for the admiration of the world, and themselves for its plaudits and for its contributions in money. It is scarcely necessary to add that their impudence was proof against the snubbing they met with in Downing street.

I have not made the foregoing statements without being sure of my facts. I attended different meetings of this

society, notably the annual meetings held in June 1843 in Free Mason's Hall, Great Queen street, London. These meetings, ostensibly public, were in some degree practically secret. The card of admission of Mr. William Clark, editor of the *London Morning Herald*, given to me by that gentleman, carefully scanned, nevertheless procured for me admission. When plans were laid for overturning the institutions of Texas, and for using Texas as a catspaw for undermining the bordering states, it was my duty as representative of Texas, to use all proper means to ascertain them. I made memorandums at the time of the plans and counsels I heard discussed in that society. They aimed at the abolition of slavery in Texas, they scrupled not at the means nor at the consequences. They tried to launch their own government in the crusade, to compass which they recoiled from no misrepresentations. They belied their own government: they falsely represented it as favoring their schemes in order to magnify their own influence, and as it appeared to me in order also to inveigle other coöperation. Of these facts there is no mistake. I heard the reports, I witnessed their proceedings. Plans of plots against Texas and against the southern states were discussed, modified, laid over for further consideration in my hearing.

These facts were communicated to Mr. Van Zandt, Texas minister at Washington, as well as to our own state department. My letters were in the hands of Mr. Calhoun, who, as he afterwards told me, placed them with Judge Upshur. But it was by no means through the letters of the Texas minister at London, that was mainly conveyed the information which so powerfully excited the public mind in the United States. The purposes and

boastings of the anti-slavery fanaticism were advisedly scattered broadcast. Rumor with her thousand tongues, mostly in exaggerated letters of alarmists, brought them hither. As a specimen I mention an incident insignificant enough taken by itself. Mr. A. I. Yates of Galveston wrote a letter to a Mr. Converse, an American then in London, on some colonization enterprise. In a sort of postscript Mr. Yates stated that he had had an important conversation with Capt. Elliot, then British minister in Texas, on the abolition of slavery in Texas, and that Capt. Elliot would make it the subject of a communication to his government in his next dispatches. He suggested to Mr. Converse to call at the foreign office and get a look at Capt. Elliot's dispatches! A queer idea Mr. Yates surely had of business in the foreign office. Gen. Duff Green, then in London on a singular semi-official mission, got a copy of the letter. Naturally an alarmist he had the letter of Mr. Yates, with existing comments and innendos, widely circulated in American newspapers. The worst effect of this publication was that through sheer ignorance of the writer, Mr. Yates, it seemed to connect the British cabinet with the abolition crusades. Other incidents of a similar character occurred at this period. Public sentiment at the south was inflamed to exasperation at the idea of British intermeddling with slavery. It was keenly resented by leading democratic statesmen of the north. Mr. Everett, American minister at London, preserved silence on these subjects till, as I had reason to believe, his attention was pointedly invited to them by his own government. Mr. Everett was an accomplished scholar, even among the scholars of Europe; a gentleman of varied and accurate information, adorned with virtues, but by temperament

too timid a politician to be a statesman. Holding anti-slavery notions his silence appeared to be misinterpreted.

An inflamed, exasperated public opinion in the United States at the idea of British interference with our domestic institutions powerfully hastened annexation. And as the fanatical schemes of certain parties in that country have been distinctly stated to-night, it is fitting also here to narrate with exactness the course which the British cabinet actually pursued during this period in relation to this subject.

Every Englishman is opposed to slavery. This opinion is, as it were, a part of the common law, and obtains universally. But he is not necessarily a fanatic or a propagandist. Careful inquiry, conducted indirectly for greater certainty, satisfied me that whatever communication may have been made by Captain Elliot to his government on abolition in Texas, if made as stated in Mr. Yates's letter, it was wholly ignored at the foreign office. Immediately Lord Aberdeen was informed that Messrs. Andrews and Tappan were intrusive representatives, he gave orders that they should not be again received. They had but one interview and that a brief one. At that interview, on their stating their errand, he remarked that it was the wish of the government, that slavery should be abolished everywhere. To the inquiry, whether the government would guaranty the interest on a small loan which should enable the people of Texas to do away slavery, he replied that his government was extremely averse to such guaranties; but, he was not prepared to say that they would not guaranty for this purpose, "if it was the wish of the *people of Texas*." This was a frank, voluntary statement made by Lord Aberdeen to me, to enable me

to disabuse the Texas government of error if any existed. He had no sympathy with these schemes and manœuvres, he was manifestly disgusted at the efforts made to drag the name of the cabinet into them.

Shortly afterwards I had an interview with him ostensibly on a different matter. I then believed and still believe, that this interview was had mainly in reference to the excitement caused in the United States, by the belief that machinations were going on in London with the knowledge and, as was thought, with some cooperation of the British government, for interfering with, and for the overthrow of, American slavery. To his inquiry covering the whole ground, I replied: "The excitement is a patent fact. The people of the northern states are very generally opposed to slavery. Nevertheless, almost to a man they would unite with the south, to repel any outside or foreign interference at the risk of any consequences, however extreme." In reply, Lord Aberdeen thought the excitement uncalled for — there had been no real cause for it — he regretted it — he spoke of the immense trade between Great Britain and the United States, citing some statistical figures, as a reason why they should wish to maintain a good understanding with the United States — he regretted he had said a word on the subject of slavery in America; and "since it had given so much offense across the water, he would not say another word on this subject." He requested me so to state it. Accordingly I made this statement to Mr. Everett. I communicated it to the secretary of state of Texas. I wrote it to the Texas minister at Washington. Am I in error in supposing Lord Aberdeen thought Mr. Everett somewhat remiss in

keeping his government correctly informed on the agitating matters in question?

The armistice proposed by Mexico and the negotiations which took place without result in the winter of 1843–4 must not be passed over without notice. Notice is rendered more necessary in order to correct a grave error in the incomplete and otherwise not wholly reliable history of Texas by Mr. Yoakum. In vol. II, 421, Mr. Yoakum writes: "At the same time Texas was informed that Mr. Doyle, the British *chargé d'affaires* had been instructed to propose to Mexico a settlement of her difficulties with Texas based upon the abolition of slavery in the latter." Mr. Doyle was not so instructed, he was not instructed at all on these matters. The proposition of an armistice came unsolicited from Gen. Santa Anna. Mr. Doyle had nothing to say about it. Apparently it grew out of, perhaps was a part of, the conferences of General Santa Anna with "lawyer Robinson" — matters of peculiar notoriety at the time. Mr. Packenham was at this time in London on leave of absence from his post in Mexico. He stated emphatically that Santa Anna could not retain his position two days were he to treat with Texas on the basis of independence, and also that Santa Anna was himself personally bitterly opposed to it.

On the 16th of June Lord Aberdeen said to me with special reference to this armistice — "The British representative at Mexico has been for some time *silent* on this subject" — silent on the subject of the relations of Texas and Mexico and on British mediation. At the same in-

terview, on my intimating that the armistice might be preliminary to peace on the basis of independence and that it might be the result of the friendly offices of her majesty's government; he replied that he did not think the armistice was the result of such friendly offices, nor that the possible interpretation which I had suggested of its being preliminary to peace was the correct one. In a conversation the same day on the same subject with Mr. Addington, under secretary of state, after alluding pointedly to his conversations with Mr. Packenham, he said that "possibly Santa Anna's object in proposing the armistice might be to gain time for disposing of Yucatan" "with the purpose of taking active measures afterwards to subjugate Texas." It was intended to let me understand, if I could see it, that this was clearly Mr. Packenham's opinion. Many of you will remember that Yucatan was at that time in insurrection. I need not dwell longer on the armistice — it had no results — it did not impede nor hasten annexation. President Houston at once saw through it and promptly disavowed the acts of the Texas commissioners. This step of Gen. Houston excited some surprise — events vindicated his sagacity.

Near the close of 1843, to wit, Oct. 16 of that year, Mr. Upshur, American secretary of state, proposed to Texas in the solemn form of intercourse between nations, through Mr. Van Zandt, Texas minister at Washington, to make a treaty of annexation. Previously he had on different occasions called Mr. Van Zandt's attention to this subject and had informed him that "he had been actively engaged in preparing the minds of the American people for it." This preparing the minds of the people meant not only the setting forth of the general substantive advantages to

them of annexation and the appealing to the Anglo Norman greed for land, for territory and also the urging upon their attention the singularly vulnerable south-western frontier as it then existed; but it meant also inflaming the public mind still more by charging on the British government the machinations and plots of the anti-slavery fanatics for interfering with southern institutions, and on that government the fixed purpose to secure a firm footing in Texas and control over its policy. A treaty of annexation, as is well known, was negotiated — after long pending before the American senate it was rejected. While this treaty was so pending, its rejection was foreseen by the British and French governments, and distinctly foretold by them to your speaker.

After the rejection of the treaty, the two European governments undertook the settlement of the relations of Texas and Mexico in vigorous earnest. Simply alluding to the fact that the United States after inviting annexation had receded from their invitation, the British minister said in effect — we have hitherto in good faith earnestly, repeatedly pressed on Mexico our good offices supported by the strongest arguments in favor of peace on the basis of independence. In this we have acted in the interest of both countries, in the interest of humanity, of the peace of the world, in the interests of commerce. You could not expect us to use more stringent means. Mr. Polk, democratic candidate for the presidency, declared for annexation. Mr. Clay, the leader and exponent of the whig party, in a public letter gave as his reason for opposing annexation that it would be the adoption of the war with Mexico. "You cannot," added the British minister, "expect us to beat the bush for the United States to catch the bird."

If Texas now, said he, wishes to remain a permanently separate, independent state, peace shall be established.

Accordingly in June, 1844, Lord Aberdeen proposed to the minister of Texas to "pass a diplomatic act," in which five powers should be invited to participate — to wit: Great Britain, France, the United States, Texas and Mexico. The basis of the proposed diplomatic act was peace between Texas and Mexico and the permanent separate independence of Texas — the parties to the act to be its guarantors. "The United States would be invited to be a party to the act, but it was not expected that they would accept the invitation." It was believed Mexico would participate, but, in case of her refusal, England, France and Texas, having passed the act as between themselves, Mexico would be immediately "forced to abide its terms. The act if passed only by the three powers would not be abandoned — it would be maintained." The terms, effect and possible consequences to the several parties to the act, and to powers not parties to it, were maturely considered, fully discussed and clearly understood between Lord Aberdeen and the minister of Texas. The two European powers asked no privileges, hinted at none, did not propose to touch directly or indirectly, made no allusion even to any institutions of Texas, nor to its domestic or foreign policy outside the express terms of the act. These were limited absolutely to the objects on the face of it — peace and permanent independence.

The French government, both the king in person and Monsieur Guizot, in response to my inquiries replied that they would unite in the diplomatic act embracing the terms proposed by Lord Aberdeen. This cooperation of France, Texas also agreeing, would have made the diplo-

matic act a certainty and secured peace with Mexico and the separate permanent independence of Texas. An incident occurred in this connection which illustrates Louis Philippe's ready use of idiomatic English and the fact that at times at least he was his own minister. On a visit of courtesy to him at the palace of Neuilly, after conversation on other topics, I said that I wished before leaving for London to make an inquiry of Monsieur Guizot, if I could do so without indiscretion, whether the French government would unite with the British cabinet in the diplomatic act. The king promptly rejoined — "As for the *question you put to me*, Mr. Smith, I am ready to answer it now." It was not with him "*an inquiry of Monsieur Guizot*" — it was a "*question put*" *to himself*. The next day I found Monsieur Guizot ready, without any preface, with his affirmative reply.

In answer to my dispatches to the Texas department of state, communicating the proposition for a diplomatic act with the tenor of its terms, President Houston, in a note written in his own hand, instructed his secretary of state, Dr. Anson Jones, to forward immediately to Ashbel Smith instructions to conclude the diplomatic act on the terms proposed by Lord Aberdeen. Instead of sending instructions as ordered, Mr. Jones sent me a leave of absence to return to Texas. Mr. Jones was not only secretary of state; he was then president elect.

Great events in human history appear often to be caused by slight or contingent circumstances. More profound study leads to the conclusion that great events find their true cause in immutable facts and in ripeness of circumstances; that contingent incidents are occasions merely, not causes.

Still, we might pause here and contemplate what order of things would probably have followed had Mr. Jones obeyed the orders of President Houston. The British minister was ready — the Count de Ste Aulaire, French ambassador at London, was ready with instructions and full powers to pass the act. There were no new points to be discussed and settled. The negotiation might have been completed at a single sitting. The act could have been forwarded to Texas as soon as the clerks could have prepared engrossed copies. The senate, probably both houses of the Texas congress, would have been immediately convened. I was not in Texas at the time, but persons of different parties, thoroughly conversant with public sentiment, have led me to believe that an honorable treaty bringing peace to this land would have been accepted with shouts of joy. Such was the opinion of Sam Houston. Such was the opinion of Anson Jones. I had it from themselves. The diplomatic act negotiated in conformity with the instructions of President Houston, as just stated, would have been submitted to the people of Texas at a moment when annexation twice spurned by the United States seemed hopeless. The excitement on the subject of British meddling with American slavery had not yet been fanned into a flame in the United States, had not yet reached Texas — the minds of politicians in Texas had not yet been tempted and dazzled into extreme eagerness by promises of office under federal appointment — the masses of the people of Texas had not yet been cajoled into a desire for annexation by unstinted promises of the great and goodly things which the administration at Washington was burning to do for Texas, so soon as it should become a member of the American union. The country had but

one wish then — that wish was for peace. The promises of Mr. Polk's administration are utterly unredeemed to this day.

Would war have followed the passing of the diplomatic act? Would an attempt have been made by the United States to enforce what is called the Monroe doctrine by an appeal to arms? No. The United States had spurned the admission of Texas — they had been invited to take part in the proposed negotiations — they would have had to confront Great Britain and France with Spain and Mexico. Individuals talk flippantly of war — men at the head of affairs are conscious of responsibility. And on the other hand turning our thoughts for a moment to later, to very recent time, and referring to the mightiest matter which has befallen this people since their birth as a nation in 1776, would Texas have been drawn into the war of secession? Would there rather have been an exodus from other states to Texas, an independent republic, like the people of God of old, to a promised land?

Why did Anson Jones, secretary of state, disobey the orders of President Sam Houston? Why did he not send instructions to Ashbel Smith to pass the diplomatic act? It is scarcely possible for me to be in error in asserting that Mr. Jones declined to send me the instructions, because he intended to make the diplomatic act, bringing honorable peace and independence, a measure, and it would have proved, as he clearly saw, the prominent measure, of his administration. It did not enter his thoughts to

oppose, to attempt to thwart the wishes of the people of Texas. Annexation, just spurned again, appeared indefinitely postponed if not forever hopeless. He said to Ashbel Smith on his return from Europe and entering on his new duties as secretary of state: "It was hardly fair to deprive you of the honor of negotiating a treaty in London, but the negotiation shall take place here, and you as secretary of state shall conduct it for Texas." He remarked that as president elect he had the right to decline obeying the orders of President Houston in question. But events culminating in annexation were crowding on too rapidly, too powerfully, to suffer stay; they outstripped every other policy. New impulses too were added to this movement. Some of this I propose to mention presently in brief detail.

Matters also had ripened in Mexico, probably in some degree under British and French influence. It is certain that Mexico changed its policy towards Texas in view of Texas becoming, as an independent power, a barrier against encroachment by the United States. Such encroachment seems to have been a source of apprehension to every Mexican administration. In January, 1845, I had an interview with Señor Arrangoiz, Mexican consul general, resident at New Orleans. We met singularly, by arrangement of the late Edmund I. Forstall, in Col. Forstall's office. No other person than Señor Arrangoiz was at any moment present at the interview — no introduction of any kind — neither his name or quality nor mine was pronounced — he had been personally described to me. Entering the office alone, I found sitting there alone a gentleman of quite fair complexion — we commenced talking — the interview lasted long — the range of topics

and views was wide and comprehensive. I left satisfied that Mexico would make peace on the basis of independence.

No action had been taken in Texas responsive to the proffered diplomatic act. The British and French cabinets nevertheless continued to pursue vigorously their efforts to procure peace for Texas by the most urgent representations in favor of it to the Mexican cabinet. They were kept fully aware, by the reports of their diplomatic representatives in Texas and in the United States, of the great and increasing excitement in the United States on the subject of Texas and of the fierce and unscrupulous activity with which the politicians of the opposition here strove to drive President Jones into the adoption of their own wild schemes. Had they succeeded, had Mr. Jones quailed, had he given way before their menaces of violent overthrow of his administration, this fair commonwealth of Texas would have been then wrecked. Their schemes were nothing less or other than, taking inspiration from their wild wishes and confident of the speedy passing of some measure of annexation, to declare the government of the republic of Texas at an end and to abide the organization of a new government after the federal government should have passed an act of annexation. They seemed to have a vague notion of some such unintelligible procedure as throwing themselves into the arms of the United States.

It was among these schemes to renew active hostilities against Mexico by sending forward the militia of Texas to operate on the Rio Grande frontier. In this resumption of hostilities there was neither military plan, nor means, nor capable head, nor reasonable object. Its pur-

pose was by exasperating Mexico to destroy the prospects of peace. For if peace with Mexico were tendered, these politicians, whom I shall presently characterize, feared the people would embrace it. This project seems to have originated in the United States east of the Sabine; for after the passage of the annexation resolutions by the American congress, the same policy of sending the Texas militia to the Rio Grande was vehemently urged on President Jones by the agents of the administration at Washington. Its purpose was to provoke Mexico to strike the first blow in the war which was deemed not improbable to grow out of annexation. It was a lost fear. There survived in Mexico enough of the unforgiving Castilian pride to need no pricking on. Mexico, as is known, struck promptly, first, and with her might. I return to our immediate subject.

More than thirty years have now elapsed, and I look back with admiration on the sublime calmness of Mr. Jones, who pursued the unruffled tenor of duty amidst threats, denunciations and falsehoods in newspapers, in public speeches, amidst insidious plots to betray him into fatal measures and to overturn his administration. I may here repeat for the younger members of my audience, that I am not adverting to vague rumors which startle for an instant like a jack o' lantern and then vanish; but of false statements, such as were published in letters over the respectable name of Ex-President John Tyler.

The people of Texas, as so often stated, had longed for peace, had repeatedly under every administration, through congressional as well as executive action, importuned foreign powers to employ their good offices to obtain it for Texas. These efforts were now about to be crowned with

success in the firm establishment of durable peace. This fact was well known. There was no secrecy about it. Was it for President Jones to turn on France and England and say to these friends we don't want any more of your good offices? We can get along now without you? Was he too to forget the rough snubbing Texas had had to put up with when applying, and once on invitation, for admission into the union? Was he to forget that annexation was not yet an accomplished fact?

But why did England and France continue to press their peace measures, as they did even after the passage of the annexation act by the American congress? We must bear in mind as a general rule of action of these governments, that having deliberately adopted a course of action they do not hastily in mid ocean abandon it. Relying on their ministers in Texas they were led to believe that honorable peace with independence being tendered to the people of Texas, the people would embrace it. These ministers being here could judge for themselves of public opinion. They formed their judgment from all the elements of action and so informed their governments. Any attempt to mislead these gentlemen would have proved a mortifying failure; but no such attempt in any degree was made. Moreover their attention was specially invited to the representative character of the Texas government. This was declared in formal terms in the protocol accompanying the peace negotiations with Mexico: it was read by Ashbel Smith to Captain Elliot and M. de Saligny. This protocol was published several years ago. In these trying and difficult times Anson Jones indulged in none of the cheap sentimental Americanism then so rife — he made no professions, he was carried away by no false enthu-

siasm — he did not despair of the fortunes of Texas — he was not blown about — he did not falter — and, with consummate wisdom, he did not precipitate action. With him it was at all times the calm transaction of business. Peace proffered he would present it to the people. Annexation tendered he would present it to the people. Both within reach at the same time, he would present both to the people for *their* option, for *their* selection, for *their* determination. His personal preference for annexation or for peace did not mould, did not bias his action as chief executive officer of Texas. The foreign ministers believed him lukewarm on annexation — *they* did not err — *he* manfully and honestly did his duty.

Where was Sam Houston and what part did he enact in these impetuous times? He could not be ignored, though again a private citizen. I found him at the seat of government at Washington on the Brazos on my arrival there from London and Paris in February, 1845. He generally abstained from much talking — no man could better be silent when he wished to be, when it was not his cue to talk — but his silence was not equivocal — he stood a giant of power in the land — he stood by President Jones and on his strong arm Mr. Jones visibly leaned for support. President Jones's administration was in all its leading policy a continuation of the preceding administration of President Houston.

General Houston was not considered to be very ardent for annexation — nor was he. In my opinion his *own* judgment — and in him judgment was preeminently calm and thoughtful, his very bursts of tempestuous passion were premeditated — his own judgment was opposed to annexation. In intercourse with Houston

running through more than a quarter of a century, I never imagined there was more than one human being to whose judgment he deferred and to which he postponed his own. That man was Andrew Jackson. Gen. Jackson wrote to Gen. Houston more than once urging annexation. Those letters were not shown by him at the time. I have never seen them. No man ever loved the American union, the United States, with more intense affection than Houston. He had poured out the blood of his youth like water in its battles. But he had grave doubts whether the welfare of Texas or of the United States would be promoted by their union under one common government.

An incident which then occurred is not without significance as to the opinions he then pondered over. He was leaving Washington on the Brazos for eastern Texas one morning in February, 1845. He came into my private room, booted, spurred, whip in hand. Said he, "Saxe Weimar"— the name of his saddle horse — "is at the door, saddled. I have come to leave Houston's last words with you. If the congress of the United States shall not by the fourth of March pass some measure of annexation which Texas can with honor accede to, Houston will take the stump against annexation for all time to come." When he wished to be emphatic he spoke of himself by name, Houston, in the third person. Without another word, embracing after his fashion, he mounted and left.

General Houston and Ex-President Jones afterwards became very unfriendly. Bitter things were said on either side. Bitter things have since been, unwisely as I think, published. Despite all afterthought, there was during all this period, in the main, confidence and friendly counsel

between them. The personal hostility was chiefly created afterwards by tale-bearing politicians, who had an interest in arraying Gen. Houston against Mr. Jones. The joint resolution of the United States congress was interpreted to authorize annexation by resolution or by treaty. General Houston once told me that he advised Mr. Jones to insist on the mode by treaty as it is among the incidents of a treaty that it can be abrogated. Whether any importance is to be attributed to this distinction, the idea indicates an underlying animus of Houston. He expressed himself as displeased at President Jones's repudiation of his advice.

I stated a few moments since that President Jones's administration was in its policy a continuation of that of Houston's. It belongs to the times of which we are treating to mention the leading features of that policy. The contemplation of them at this day will not hurt us. A hard money currency, gold and silver — a paper currency in general condemned in the messages both of General Houston and of Mr. Jones — economy, appropriations never exceeding the current incoming revenues — no increase of the public debt — no offensive hostile expeditions against Mexico while that country confined itself to threats — peace with Mexico by friendly negotiation and not by further conquest — peace with the Indian tribes by maintaining on our side good faith with them — peace at home under the *laws* administered by the *courts of the country* — these formed the permanent policy of Texas under Sam Houston's and Anson Jones's administrations. Permit me to relate an incident. At one period the war fever run very high, and on one occasion a committee of gallant gentlemen waited on Houston asking his advice

and cooperation, and they requested him to address our fellow citizens in this sense. He made a public speech which he concluded with advice as he had been desired to give it. This advice was in two words — "*plant corn.*"

At the close of the short session of the American congress, March, 1845, the joint resolution authorizing annexation was passed. About the same time that intelligence of its passage reached Texas came also official information that Mexico would conclude a peace on the basis of independence. This power had required that Texas should first sign the preliminary treaty. This preliminary treaty, embodying all essential provisions, was signed by the Texas secretary of state, Ashbel Smith. It was carried to Mexico by the British minister, Captain Elliot. This course was in pursuance of the mediation repeatedly asked for almost to importunity, of the English and French governments. The preliminary treaty was signed by the Mexican secretary of state, Don Luis G. Cuevas — approved by Herrera, president of Mexico — and ratified by an immense majority by the Mexican congress. Official news of this ratification reached Texas. This was peace, peace so long desired, peace so earnestly prayed for. But the people of Texas now would have none of it. They appeared frantic in their hostility to it.

Whence came this hostility, taken by itself so inexplicable? Whence came this new born hostility?

There was in Texas a party composed of gentlemen of great ability, of former public services, of high ambition, of ardent imaginations, of lofty patriotism, opposed to the

administrations of Sam Houston and of Anson Jones, with the unreasoning energy so often characteristic of party contests. They were out of office which they coveted, and the success of the Houstonian policy already adverted to, crowned with peace, seemed to insure indefinite continuance in power of the Houston party and indefinite exclusion of the leaders of the opposition. The promises of high office made to them by annexation emissaries, of whom I shall speak presently, told on these gentlemen. I do not impugn their patriotism, but these promises told on them, perhaps unconsciously to themselves. Among them were some of the bravest spirits that fought at San Jacinto and who had borne full share in organizing the government of the republic. In the opposition also were adventurous spirits whose day dreams were of warlike expeditions, men as bold, as ardent, as Cortez or Pizarro, and whose fancies revelled in desperate battles and in imaginary plunder of the halls of the Montezumas. The pacific policy of Houston, long and solid peace with Mexico, sounded a long farewell, the occupation gone for these restless spirits. The contingencies of annexation offered chances of war. War came, but alas for their dreams, it was waged under other auspices, other leaders, other counsels, in none of which had they part.

But how came the masses of the people to be so changed, so roused, so excited, so unanimous in favor of annexation? A somewhat succinct statement is needed to understand the events of the six months next preceding annexation.

The acquisition of Texas became the cherished policy of Mr. Tyler's administration. He left it an unimpaired inheritance to President Polk and the party of which he

was the exponent. It would be childish to attribute their policy to friendship for Texas. Nations and political parties have no cousins. The party now in question coveted Texas for their own fame, for their own political advantage, for using it as subservient to the strength of the United States. Texas was becoming so prosperous — its capacity for self government established — its foreign relations so friendly and advantageous — peace with Mexico in prospect with certainty of speedy accomplishment — they who had before spurned Texas might now well fear that the next refusal would come from this side of the Sabine, and the refusal would be final. Texas would no longer be used as a makeweight in United States party contests. There was no time to lose. The whole enginery of political manœuvering was employed with extraordinary activity. To the initiated in Texas, and to the discontented, most urgent appeals in letters were addressed, the country was deluged with United States partisan newspapers charging in express terms the government of Texas, embracing General Houston with President Jones and gentlemen holding office under him, with most odious crimes. Specific crimes were alleged against these gentlemen, which if true would have consigned them to infamy. Treason, that vague reproach of which we have heard a disgusting surfeit these latter years, were bandied without stint.

One example is enough. The subsidized *New Orleans Picayune* charged General Houston with "treason, bribery, and corruption." And in connection with this topic to state what has been already adverted to, that President Jones together with the minister of Texas to Great Britain was charged with being in a plot to sell Texas to Great

Britain for gold. And "British gold" was mouthed as briskly as if they who did so had seen it counted out. The British cabinet was charged with deep and damning villainy in schemes against Texas, unparalleled since the conspiracy of Spain against the Venetian republic. If Americans have had one passion more ingrained than any other, it has been jealousy of England. The people of Texas inherited it. That I may not do injustice to our own people, neither to their intelligence nor patriotism, I beg to recall to your recollection the nefarious schemes and plots of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society of England, which I have already mentioned. These wretched fanatics prosecuted their plans with remorseless energy. They did not scruple to allow it to go forth that they were at least countenanced by their own government. They surely were not countenanced by the party then in power. Lord Aberdeen regarded these individuals with ill concealed disgust. Still many honest minded intelligent gentlemen in America could not resist the suspicion that they were secretly viewed with favor by the British government. I entertained a similar apprehension until disabused by careful observation. The British minister to Texas, who it was said owed his appointment to the great political influence of the Elliots in England, being an avowed abolitionist was a fact calculated to give credit to suspicions of this character.

In Texas at that day, when the masses of the people were as intelligent, as high toned, as zealous, as patriotic as gentlemen of the class commonly considered leaders of public opinion, it was a matter of course that the falsehoods and suspicions adverted to should tell on the masses of our people. They did so. But this was not all.

Major Donelson, the regularly accredited minister, and other official agents sent to Texas by the administration of President Polk, were most lavish of their averments of what the federal government would do for Texas so soon as the consummation of annexation would enable them to execute their promises. Among the most distinguished of these official agents were Ex-Governor Yell of Arkansas, General Wickliff of Kentucky, Commodore Stockton of the United States navy. The promises were among others to clear out our rivers for navigation, to deepen the entrances of our harbors, to build light houses on our coast for commerce, to erect military works, fortifications for the defense of the coast, to execute important works of internal improvement, and to do various and sundry other good things for Texas which were beyond our means, or which they could do for us better than we of ourselves could. Under the fostering protection of the United States it was gloriously prophesied, with spread eagle magniloquence, that capital would flow into Texas in ocean streams to develop and utilize our incalculable natural resources. Employment, wealth, prosperity would reign in this land. Here in the west lay the inexhaustible Orient. It would afford the administration at Washington its chiefest pleasure to do in one word all goodly things for us. I can vouch for these facts. They are known to me of personal knowledge. Major Donelson and Gov. Yell expatiated on these promises in my hearing. I know that both these gentlemen were accredited from Washington city.

I have the authority of the late Honorable Ebenezer Allen, successively attorney general and secretary of state under President Anson Jones, for the fact that General

Wickliff and Commodore Stockton were employed on the same mission of scattering promises broadcast throughout the land. Public opinion was rapidly manufactured. Public meetings were called by active partisans and at the instigation often of the gentlemen just named; the magnificent promises were unfolded; suspicions were aroused and practiced on; the people were inflamed. It should perhaps be stated in this connection, with more directness than in the allusion I made a moment since, that the administration agents just mentioned were unstinted in promises, addressed directly to active politicians who were deemed approachable, and indirectly to gentlemen whom it would not have been discreet to approach in such style, of appointment to office by the federal administration as soon as Texas should be a state and themselves citizens of the United States.

Under such influences, relying on the promises made by the federal officials, and animated by affection for the country of their birth, the strongest after all of the motives governing their actions, the people of Texas with overwhelming unanimity rejected the overtures of peace from Mexico, sacrificed as on an altar their independent autonomy, voted for annexation and became a state of the American union.

I need not stop here, gentlemen of the historical society, to say that neither the promises of office to individuals — we do not care enough for their disappointment to regret or be pleased — nor the promises of generosity and munificence to Texas, have in aught or in any degree been fulfilled. I now recall as their only bestowal two incorrect and calumnious letters published by President Tyler after the close of his term of office. If Texas remains undi-

vided, it is sufficient unto itself; and, its teeming, swelling population, already approaching two millions, will tell in national councils and on the men who shall direct them.

Annexation being rendered certain, President Jones sent your speaker to Europe to close up in a becoming manner our legations there. General Terrell, who had been sent to London where he still was, could do no official act as his nomination for minister had been rejected by the Texas senate. President Jones did not think it necessary, on closing the old republic of Texas, to signalize his enthusiasm for annexation by throwing the friendly intercourse, the numerous good offices, the warm support that had been rendered to Texas by the European powers, and the peace they had obtained for us, back into their face without the cheap courtesy of saying good bye. There were, too, some minor forms and duties which could not be honorably or decently omitted. It would not be worth while to mention matters like this, were not this visit of the Texas minister denounced and the statement vouched for in newspapers and printed letters, that he was sent to invoke England and France to intervene with arms in Texas affairs and to receive for the two eminent patriots, whom the people of Texas had chosen to preside in its government, fabulous sums of money as the wages of treachery — sums of money that existed only in the unsoundly moralized imaginations of those who vented the calumny. Bating its insolence, the ignorance of a leading New Orleans paper was ludicrous in its complaint that the Texas minister had passed through that city without informing the editor of his instructions, and where he was going and what he was going after.

President Jones convened the Texas congress, called a

convention of the people. The overtures of Mexico and those of the United States were submitted to them. The measures necessary to consummate annexation were passed. President Jones bearing himself the while with careful judgment and great discretion, amid wild threats and wilder counsels — in homely phrase he waited for the wagon: and all was well accomplished.

A very few words concerning the opinions and course of leading men in Texas on the great measures I have been considering and I have done.

That I may not trespass too long on your patience I forbear to speak as fully as I wish of the part borne during these times by Ex-President General Lamar, of Judge Burnet and other eminent patriots of Texas, men of great public services, of distinguished ability and wide influence. They were less conspicuous during the last acts of the drama, running through four years, because they held no office. Opposition to annexation was proclaimed by General Lamar and the political party which acted with him, as a leading policy of his administration. Of this party Vice President Burnet was a conspicuous member. At a later period, near the close of the republic, they and their party had become warm friends of annexation. I need not add that these two gentlemen did not participate in the wild excitement of inferior men. Long as I have detained you I must beg your patience for a few words concerning these gentlemen. The age of chivalry could never have shown a

more knightly paladin, a more princely troubadour, than Mirabeau B. Lamar. He knew not the emotion of personal fear, the stern simplicity of his love of justice was never marred by a selfish motive. David G. Burnet united the *perfidum ingenium* of the Scotch character with the unbending sternness of principle of an old covenanter. Old John Knox would have hugged such a character with grim delight. It does not detract from the virtues of these gentlemen that neither of them possessed eminent administrative capacity, nor in a high degree that knowledge of human nature and tact in managing men which inferior men often acquire; nor that political wisdom and statesmanship accorded to but few, but still indispensable in moulding forming institutions and in conducting public affairs during periods of transition and danger.

Was General Houston in favor of or opposed to annexation? This question has already and perhaps sufficiently been answered. I add another word. In my opinion his strong judgment preponderated in favor of separate independence. In 1836, he voted for annexation for a reason he stated to your speaker — he did not then think that the people of Texas were capable of sustaining an independent government. Time rolled on, he believed Texas capable of self-government. To his judgment it seemed a grave problem whether it was not better for Texas, better for the United States, better for the cause of liberty and republican institutions, that there should be two great self-governing peoples instead of a single one. But once again become a citizen of the United States, there was not within its broad borders a more sincere, devoted friend to the union than Sam Houston.

What was President Anson Jones's opinion on this cardinal matter? I was clearly of the belief that he would have preferred independence to annexation. He subsequently declared himself the most decided friend and promoter of annexation. In conducting affairs during this critical period, he never for a moment forgot that he was the representative of the people, not their ruler.

I have had in this address much to say of Sam Houston and of Anson Jones. I shall not now at least attempt sketches of their characters nor an eulogy of their services to Texas. May it not be permitted to an old Texian who served under them to apply to each of these gentlemen, in contemplation of their services, the inscription which I read on marble many years ago in Santa Croce, *tanto, nomini, nullum par elogium?*

The Hon. Ebenezer Allen, a gentleman of extraordinary legal acumen, President Jones's attorney general and last secretary of state, his most trusted adviser, was frankly and at all times, and by his writings in the official organ of the Texas government, an opponent of annexation.

Judge Ochiltree was decidedly friendly to annexation. Col. Wm. G. Cooke seemed to me never to trouble his head about the matter. These gentlemen, as you are aware, were members of President Jones's cabinet.

The opinion or wishes of Ashbel Smith as an individual are of no moment. But as he was secretary of state or minister of Texas at London and at Paris, and familiar with all negotiations during all this period, it may be proper to state his opinion. He advised adversely to passing the diplomatic act — when peace and independence were proffered by Mexico, his judgment was inclined to accept them. When the decision of the people was clear for an-

nexation, and its accomplishment a foregone conclusion, he squarely took ground in its favor and voted for it, on the avowed reason that in an irreversible act he would not in sentiment be separated from his own people.

I must close. After all individuals do not control great events in the history of nations. These events take place when the time for them is ripe. So it was with annexation. The time for it had come. We are now a portion of the great American union. Its fortunes are our fortunes — its prosperity is our prosperity — its honor is our honor — its glory is our glory. May the union, its prosperity, its honor, its glory be eternal.